



The President's Daily Brief

May 4, 1976

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~~Top Secret~~^{25X1}

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Lebanon: Fighting continued yesterday in the port area of Beirut;
there is no sign of a break in the deadlock between support-
ers of the two leading contenders for the presidency.
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Belgrade is trying to deflate what it believes are Soviet
expectations for major Yugoslav concessions. (Page 1)

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LEBANON: Radical Lebanese and Palestinian forces again pressed their attacks against Christian positions in the port area of Beirut yesterday, despite the announcement on Sunday that leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt had agreed to an indefinite extension of the ceasefire.

The Christians have been forced back, but they still control the main part of the port and reportedly are preparing to counterattack. Although violence subsided elsewhere in Beirut following Jumblatt's announcement, the fighting in the port area is likely to spread soon unless a determined effort is made to bring it under control.

The joint Lebanese-Syrian-Palestinian military committee is scheduled to meet today to search for ways to enforce the truce. The committee might be able to reduce the level of fighting but is unlikely to halt it.

On the political front, Christian leaders reaffirmed their support for Ilyas Sarkis to succeed President Franjiah in the scheduled balloting in parliament on Saturday. Jumblatt, who strongly supports Raymond Edde, again criticized Syria, which backs Sarkis. Delegations from the Lebanese parliament and the fedayeen may try to find a compromise candidate in talks with Syrian leaders in Damascus this week, but the main backers of Sarkis and Edde do not seem ready to yield.

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YUGOSLAVIA-USSR: Amid reports of an impending visit to Yugoslavia by General Secretary Brezhnev, Belgrade is trying to deflate what it believes are Soviet expectations for major Yugoslav concessions.

The Yugoslavs' main concern is that Brezhnev may ask that the Soviet navy be allowed more use of Yugoslavia's Adriatic ports. This issue, as well as that of pro-Soviet subversion in Yugoslavia, are recurrent themes in conversations of Yugoslav officials with our embassy representatives.

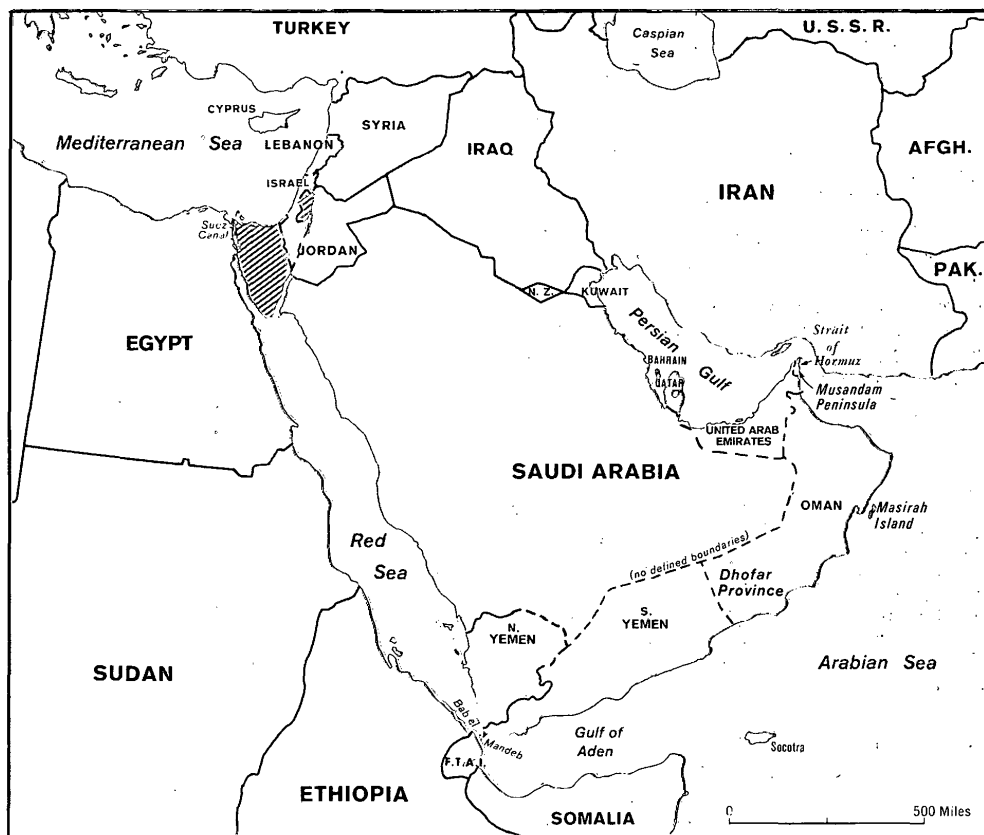
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The Yugoslavs also say that some East European countries are engaged in a "campaign" to slow exports to Yugoslavia. There is little evidence to support this claim, and the Yugoslavs may be dramatizing their trade problems with Eastern Europe to wrest a better economic deal from Brezhnev.

In a lengthy interview last week, Stane Dolanc, President Tito's deputy for party matters, publicly rejected recent Soviet statements equating Yugoslavia with the USSR's socialist allies. Dolanc sternly reiterated that Yugoslavia is, and would remain, nonaligned in foreign affairs and an independent factor in international communist party matters.

Soviet media have reported Dolanc's interview in a form that distorts its content and thrust. As conveyed by *Pravda*, *Izvestia*, and *Red Star* last weekend, the interview becomes an unqualified paean of praise for bilateral party relations.

We doubt that Brezhnev will go to Belgrade if the current Yugoslav attacks do not abate.



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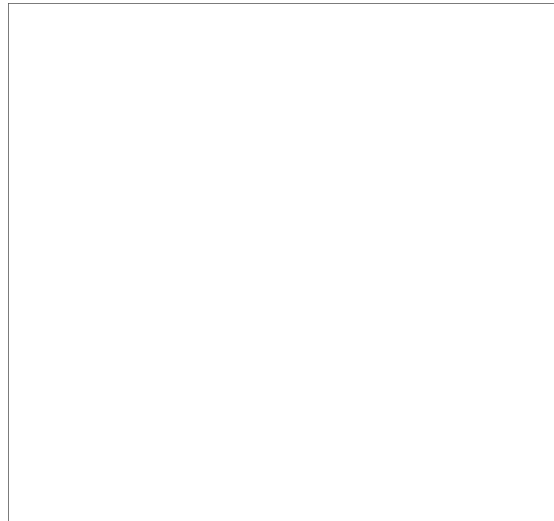
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NOTES

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[redacted] Iran [redacted]
[redacted] Oman
[redacted]



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Dissension among Nigeria's military rulers appears to be growing.

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The Supreme Military Council is badly factionalized [redacted]

[redacted] Disagreement centers on the extent of economic and political action the government should undertake. Immediate issues are the regime's anti-corruption campaign and alleged coup plotters who remain in custody.

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Major General Obasanjo, the country's head of state, reportedly is still trying to resign. [redacted]

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China is showing increased interest in some of the smaller nations of the South Pacific.

An advance team from the Chinese Foreign Ministry is in Suva, the capital of Fiji, making arrangements to open an embassy. 25X1

Prime Minister Somare of Papua New Guinea

will visit China sometime this month, and diplomatic relations will be established. The Chinese, however, probably will not be invited to send a resident ambassador to Port Moresby. 25X1

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